

# Swanson's ethics still being questioned

By Kathryn Reed

Even with Gino DiMatteo being formally sentenced April 10 to five years in federal prison, the case is not completely closed.

Still blowing in the wind is Angela Swanson. The South Lake Tahoe City Councilwoman was caught up in the DiMatteo mess in August when she was questioned, had her house searched and electronic devices confiscated because at the time DiMatteo was suspected of bribing her.

The state bribery charge against the 43-year-old DiMatteo was dropped when the feds took over. The feds only leveled drug charges against the South Lake Tahoe resident. Earlier this year he pleaded guilty to all charges.



Angela Swanson – Vern Pierson – Gino DiMatteo

No charges have ever been brought against Swanson, but she is still under suspicion.

“We are not making any comments on the Angela Swanson matter at this time,” Nancy Anderson, secretary to El Dorado County District Attorney Vern Pierson, told *Lake Tahoe News* this

week.

Swanson and DiMatteo knew each other because he at one time ran the City of Angels II medical marijuana dispensary in town and several times had business before the City Council.

Swanson along with Nancy Rollston, the head of the Lake Tahoe Educational Foundation, accepted more than \$1,000 in cash for the foundation from DiMatteo that was delivered in an unmarked brown bag. (Despite its being drug money, the foundation has never returned it. Swanson is on the nonprofit's board.)

Swanson told *Lake Tahoe News* she has had one phone conversation with the district attorney since August. That, she said, was not recent and it was to clarify paperwork.

"Nothing new is happening with me," Swanson said on April 11. "I'm not accused of anything at this point."

She is seeking from the Fair Political Practices Commission a written opinion exonerating her of any ethics violation. She said early on she received a verbal opinion saying she did nothing unethical.

Multiple phone calls to the FPPC were not returned.

Swanson said if ethics charges were filed against her by the district attorney, she would fight them.

People have told *Lake Tahoe News* that Swanson has a legal defense fund going to fight what they have been told will be an ethics case. As an elected official, Swanson must report all of those dollars and disclose donors' names.